

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 422

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 1615

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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TAGS: EGEN, CIEC, OECD

SUBJECT: CIEC HARMONIZATION OF EC POSITIONS

REF: (A) OECD PARIS 2315, (B) EC BRUSSELS 619

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE EXTRAORDINARILY WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS TO BE
DISCUSSED IN THE FOUR CIEC COMMISSIONS WILL REQUIRE UNUSUAL
EFFORTS AMONG THE DCS TO COORDINATE THEIR POSITIOS. THE MISSION
BELIEVES THAT THE US WILL NEED TO EXERCISE ALLTHE DIPLOMATIC
LEVERS AT ITS DISPOSAL TO OBTAIN CONSONANT DC POSITIONS COMPATIBLE
WITH OUR OWN. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT AN EARLY THEOLOGICAL DEBATE
ON PROCDEURES OR ON THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN "COORDINATION,"
"HARMONIZATION" OR "EXCHANGE OF VIEWS" IS THE BEST WAY TO COMMENCE
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THAT PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

2. WE HAVE READ WITH INTEREST OECD PARIS '2315 AND HOPE THAT THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS MAY BE USEFUL AS WASHINGTON APPROACHES THE PROBLEM OF COORDINATING DC POSITIONS FOR THE CIEC. WE BEGIN FROM THE PROPOSITION THAT WHAT MATTERS IS THAT THE DEVELOPED-COUNTRY PARTICIPANTS IN THE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE MAINTAIN AS COMMON A FRONT AS POSSIBLE ON THE MAIN SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO PREVENT EFFORTS BY THE 19 TO PLAY US OFF AGAINST EACH OTHER AND PRIOR TO THE COMMISSION MEETINGS CONSULT WITH THE COUNTRIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE SURPRISES AND, TO THE EXTENT POSSILBE, ACHIEVE AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE MUTUAL SUPPORT WHEREVER POSSIBLE. HOW WE DO THIS SHOULD BE LESS IMPORTANT TO US THAN THAT WE DO IT EFFECTIVELY.

3. THIS MISSION HAS NO ILLUSIONS THAT THE PROCEDURE PREFERRED BY THE EC (ESSENTIALLY, MEETINGS OF THE EIGHT OR FIVE REPRESENTATIVES IN EACH COMMISSION JUST BEFORE, OR DURING, COMMISSION MEETINGS) IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO COORDINATE. WE ARE WELL AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THE EC COMMISSION AND COREPER HAVE A VESTED BUREAUCRATIC INTEREST IN MINIMIZING FORMAL COORDINATION IN ORDER TO ENHANCE THEIR OWN ROLES, ESPECIALLY VIS-A-VIS MEMBER STATE CAPITALS. FINALLY, WE ARE NOT AT ALL SEEKING TO ARGUE AGAINST USE OF THE PARIS BACKSTOP GROUPS AS A MEANS OF GETTING AS MANY AS POSSIBLE ON BOARD WITH OUR OWN STRATEGY AND TACTICS. BUT THE FACT REMAINS THAT, LARRGELY FOR INTERNAL COMMUNITY BUREAUCRATIC REASONS, THE EC HAS TAKEN A DECISION AT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' LEVEL WHICH EFFECTIVELY PRECLUDES ITS AGREEMENT TO USE THE OECD, IEA AND TWP AS PRIMARY INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PURPOSE CITED IN PARA 2 ABOVE, MUCH LESS AS THE EXCLUSIVE INSTRUMENTS.

4. FOR THE SAME BUREAUCRATIC REASONS, AND GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE EC WILL BE REPRESENTED IN THE DIALOGUE AS A COMMUNITY AND NOT AS SEPARATE STATES, IT SEEMS TO US SELF-DEFEATING TO GET INTO AN ARGUMENT, WHICH WE CANNOT WIN, ABOUT HOW TO COORDINATE. WE DON'T HAVE TO WIN THAT PROCEDURAL ARGUMENT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE. REGARDLESS OF HOW SYMPATHETIC INDIVIDUAL EC MEMBERS MAY BE TO OUR VIEWS AS PUT FORWARD IN THE FORMAL BACKSTOP GROUPS, THE POSITIONS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ADVANCED IN THE NAME OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE DIALOGUE ITSELF WILL BE FEFINED IN BRUSSELS BY THE EC COUNCIL WORKING FROM PROPOSALS DEVELOPED IN JOINT COMMISSION/COREPER WORKING GROUPS. ANY OVERT CHALLENGE TO THAT SYSTEM WILL ONLY SUCCEED IN ALIENATING THOSE WHOSE INFLUENCE WILL BE CRUCIAL IN THE PROCESS. OUR INTEREST LIES IN SEEING TO IT THAT THEIR POSITIONS ARE AS COMPATIBLE AS POSSIBLE WITH OUR OWN, AND THAT THE BRUSSELS "SYSTEM" DOES NOT NEEDLESSLY INSERT ITSELF INTO

THE PROCESS OF THE DIALOGUE ITSELF.

5. AS WE SEE IT, THE PROBLEM ARISES PRECISELY FROM THE COMMISSION/COREPER FEAR THAT POSITIONS DEVELOPED LABORIOUSLY IN BRUSSELS MAY IN FACT BE UNDONE IN OECD/IEA/TWP MEETINGS IN PARIS, AND THEN WILL HAVE TO BE PUT BACK TOGETHER AGAIN IN BRUSSELS. THE ONLY SURE, TRIED AND TRUE COMMUNITY WAY TO AVOID THIS IS FOR THE BRUSSELS BUREAUCRACY TO INSIST THAT THE COMMUNITY DEVELOP TIGHT, SPECIFIC MANDATES, WHICH SEVERLY LIMIT THE FLEXIBILITY OF EC SPOKESMEN IN ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS. BY INSISTING THAT THE ROLE OF THE PARIS BACKSTOP GROUPS IS FORMAL COORDINATION, WE WILL ONLY SUCCEED IN PUSHING THE COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS INTO THE SELF-PROTECTIVE DEVICE OF PRECISE, RIGID INSTRUCTIONS. IT THEREFORE SEEMS THAT OUR INTERESTS IN THE DIALOGUE WILL BE BETTER SERVED IF WE CAN PREVENT SUCH RIGIDITY, AS WE SUCCESSFULLY DID IN BOTH CIEC PREPCONS. AS WE RECALL THOSE INSTANCES, THOUGH MUCH USEFUL PRE-CONFERENCE WORK WAS DONE IN IEA, THE REAL BARGAINING (AND COORDINATION) OCCURRED AS THE MEETINGS PROGRESSSED AMONG THE COUNTRIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED, AND WAS MADE POSSIBLE LARGELY BECAUSE EC SPOKESMEN DID NOT HAVE THEIR HANDS TIED BY BRUSSELS-DICTATED INSTRUCTIONS.

6. HOWEVER, EVEN IF MUCH OF THE COORDINATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE DONE ON THE SPOT, IT IS ALSO OBVIOUS THAT WE MUST USE EVERY INSTRUMENT AVAILABLE TO US TO INFLUENCE THE PROCESS BY WHICH THE EC TAKES ITS POSITION. WE BELIEVE THE FORMAL BACKSTOP GROUPS HAVE A KEY, PERHAPS CRITICAL, ROLE TO PLAY IN BRINGING THAT INFLUENCE TO BEAR. BUT IT WILL ONLY WORK IF WE HAVE TAKEN FULL ADVANTAGE OF OUR OTHER COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS (REPRESENTATIONS IN BRUSSELS AND CAPITALS, FORMAL OR INFORMAL VISITS AND TALKS AMONG KEY US AND EUROPEAN OFFICIALS IN BILATERAL MEETINGS, AT THE XCSS, ETC.). IT WOULD BE IMPRACTICAL TO LIMIT OUR COORDINATION EFFORTS TO ONE OR TWO-DAY DISCUSSIONS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN HIGH-LEVEL GROUPS MEETING JUST PRIOR TO THE CIEC COMMISSIONS. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT ENOUGH FOR THE US TO MODIFY ITS POSITION IMMEDIATELY AS A RESULT OF SUCH MEETINGS AND NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE EC.

7. TO ASSURE THAT ALL THE POSSIBLE CHANNELS REMAIN OPEN AND KEY PEOPLE REMAIN RECEPTIVE TO US INFLUENCE, WE SHOULD AT THE VERY LEAST AVOID PRECIPITATING A MAJOR DISPUTE OVER THE PROPER ROLE TO BE ASSIGNED TO THE PARIS BACKSTOP GROUPS. IN PARTICULAR, IT STRIKES US AS ESPECIALLY UNPRODUCTIVE TO ENGAGE IN A FRUITLESS CONTROVERSY WITH THE EC OVER WHETHER THE ROLE OF THOSE GROUPS IS TO "COORDINATE," "ACHIEVE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE HARMONIZATION" OR "EXCHANGE VIEWS." REGARDLESS OF HOW WE DESCRIBE IT, THE FACT IS THAT DIFFERENT INDIVISUALS WILL PLAY EACH OPPORTUNITY DIFFERENTLY, AND WHAT CONSTITUTES AN "EXCHANGE

OF VIEWS" TO ONE MAY BE "COORDINATION" TO ANOTHER. AND IF THE GROUND HAS BEEN WELL PREPARED IN ADVANCE BY EFFECTIVE USE OF EXISTING CHANNELS, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE WHAT WE SUGGESTED EARLIER TO BE OUR REAL OBJECTIVE.

8. IN SUMMARY, OUR RECOMMENDATION IS THAT WE MAKE MOST EFFECTIVE USE POSSIBLE OF ALL THE INSTRUMENTS AT OUR DISPOSAL TO BRING OUR INFLUENCE TO BEAR, BUT RECOGNIZE THAT FAILURE TO TAKE ADEQUATE ACCOUNT OF THE REALITIES OF INTERNAL COMMUNITY POLITICS AND BUREAUCRATIC CONSTRAINTS WILL ONLY SEND US OFF ON A FUTILE EFFORT TO TILT AT WINDMILLS. THE BEST WAY TO PRESERVE A USEFUL ROLE FOR THE PARIS GROUPS IS TO AVOID BACKING THE EC INTO A SEMANTIC CORNER ABOUT WHAT THE GROUPS SHOULD DO, AND INSTEAD TO DO WHAT IS POSSIBLE THERE, ALONG WITH WHAT CAN AND SHOULD BE DONE ELSEWHERE. MORRIS

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